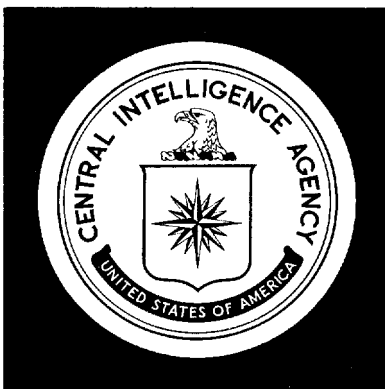


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Intelligence Memorandum

Perspectives on a Cease-fire in Vietnam

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24

8 September 1972
No. 2067/72

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
8 September 1972

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

PERSPECTIVES ON A CEASE-FIRE IN VIETNAM

The fighting in Vietnam grinds on amid increasing evidence of Communist preparations to continue the war at a high level this fall. Yet there is also growing anticipation in many quarters that some resolution of the conflict--involving a cease-fire--will soon be achieved. The Central Intelligence Agency is not in a position to discuss the specifics of any negotiations on Vietnam that may presently be underway. In this paper, however, we will discuss the intelligence information bearing on Hanoi's attitude toward a cease-fire, and the advantages and disadvantages which Hanoi might see in a cease-fire situation. We will also examine the unusually large number of reports of Communist preparations for a post-cease-fire situation that have cropped up over the past three months and attempt to explain the reasons why cease-fire seems to be such an active subject of discussion within the Communist hierarchy.

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I. The Pressures on Hanoi

The Battlefield Situation

1. There seems little doubt that Hanoi had high hopes for dramatic military and psychological results from its 1972 offensive. It seems to have calculated, particularly on the basis of experience in Lam Son 719, that it could cope on the battlefield with allied tactical airpower and helicopter mobility through the use of heavy concentrations of antiaircraft artillery. And it counted on its own artillery, tanks, and determined infantry to out-fight the ARVN on the ground. Hanoi's hope was that ARVN would suffer a series of defeats which would shake its confidence, that Communist units would fan through the countryside to disrupt pacification, and that the GVN's prestige would fall ever lower in the US. The combination of these developments, it was hoped by North Vietnam's leaders, would put Hanoi in the driver's seat by this fall.

2. Obviously, these hopes have not been realized due to a combination of stubborn ARVN resistance, Communist tactical errors, and the effectiveness of US air action against the NVA. In addition, on top of Communist disappointments in the South came the renewal of US bombing of North Vietnam and the mining of the principal North Vietnamese harbors. Hanoi certainly must have weighed the possibility of a renewal of the bombing, but its subsequent scope and precision, plus the mining of the harbors, must have come as an unexpected shock. Moreover, these actions have caused serious physical and psychological strains throughout the North. Hanoi has evidenced more concern than heretofore that mounting battlefield casualties, coupled with the bombing and the American psywar campaign might cause serious stresses in public morale.

3. Hanoi's disappointments and concerns do not mean, however, that the leadership is necessarily disheartened, near the end of its rope, or pessimistic concerning its longer term prospects in South Vietnam. Indeed, from Hanoi's point of view, it can be argued with considerable logic that the North Vietnamese

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position at present is considerably improved over that of 1970-71. Base areas and logistical routes through southern Laos and eastern Cambodia, for example, are more secure than ever before. Serious ARVN incursions into these areas are increasingly unlikely; as for the FANK, its operations now constitute little more than an occasional nuisance. NVA troops are present in South Vietnam in greater strength than a year ago and to date have successfully resisted ARVN efforts to push them back over the borders. Despite a high casualty rate among Communist forces in the South, there is little evidence of a manpower shortage. Nor are there solid indications that the NVA faces major supply constraints in South Vietnam. Despite the continuing interdiction of their internal transportation system, the North Vietnamese have been able to move sufficient supplies to maintain effective support of their troops at the front. Indeed, the Communists appear to be preparing for a new round of intensified military activity in the near future. And there is no clear evidence of serious morale problems among the North Vietnamese population. In short, the Communists appear to have both the wherewithal and the determination to continue fighting.

Sino-Soviet Support

4. One key to Hanoi's ability to continue fighting has been the materiel support it has received from the Soviet Union and China. There is little question that Hanoi was upset by the willingness--even eagerness--of Moscow and Peking to meet with President Nixon, while North Vietnam was engaged in a war with the US. In particular, Hanoi was disturbed by the tepid reaction of its allies to the American bombing and mining of North Vietnam. The Soviets and Chinese not only chose to avoid a direct challenge to the US blockade but continued to give priority to the cautious adjustment of their relations with the US. The Soviets displayed annoyance with North Vietnam's escalation of the fighting and apparently urged the DRV leadership to modify their demands and negotiate a compromise settlement before the American election. Chou En-lai has preached more obliquely on the benefits of a negotiated settlement.

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5. But diplomatic pressures devoid of logistical constraints are not likely to have a major impact on Hanoi's planning. The North Vietnamese have never taken their allies totally into their confidence, basically because they have little trust in either of them. Over the years, Hanoi's reaction to its allies' fraternal advice has ranged from deafness to hostility. Hanoi is well aware that Moscow and Peking place higher priority on other objectives in their current maneuvering with the US than on the war and suspects that their advice does not necessarily have North Vietnamese interests at heart. This year's summit meetings have reinforced Hanoi's fears of great-power connivance that would undercut North Vietnam's basic objectives.

6. The North Vietnamese leaders, however, remain acutely sensitive to any signs of diminishing interest on the part of their allies, and are vulnerable to threats, implicit or explicit, that hint at a serious cutback in logistical assistance. Their sensitivity has been reflected in a number of statements and articles in recent months which have emphasized North Vietnam's role as the vanguard of the proletarian revolution, a theme stressed heavily in Pham Van Dong's 2 September (National Day) speech. As the one nation actively engaged in fighting imperialism, Hanoi's leaders see themselves "entitled" to be fully supported by their Communist brethren. (This is another thesis which was also pointedly stressed by Pham Van Dong on 2 September.)

7. Current Sino-Soviet efforts to move supplies into the DRV, as well as recent agreements for supplementary aid, have probably reassured the North Vietnamese that while they may be slighted, they will not be abandoned. China and the Soviet Union apparently have resolved their difficulties in coordinating supply activities. Soviet ships now unload in Chinese ports. A newly constructed pipeline in the DRV is facilitating shipments of petroleum products; other supplies are moving steadily by road and rail from China, while a small percentage is moving in by lighters from Chinese ships anchored outside the minefields. In our judgment

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North Vietnam at this point is receiving sufficient imports (on an average daily basis) to meet its minimum economic needs as well as to provide sufficient supplies for its military forces in the South to continue the war with periodic high levels of activity.

8. Hanoi probably is reasonably confident that this commitment will continue at least into next year. The North Vietnamese probably reason that neither Moscow nor Peking wants to risk being tagged as the instrument of North Vietnam's failure. And their continuing rivalry for regional influence, which has worked to Hanoi's benefit in the past, still argues against either abandoning the field. The North Vietnamese, however, are likely to remain nervous about the constancy of their allies' support, particularly in light of Hanoi's distaste for what it views as Moscow's and Peking's "coziness" with Washington.

The US Election

9. Although Hanoi's leaders are paying close attention to the US election, the record of past years argues that this factor is not paramount in their calculations. Hanoi views all US politicians with suspicion and is leery about whether any US president actually would carry out his campaign "promises." Nonetheless, Hanoi has indicated its clear preference for Senator McGovern's position on the war, and if he appeared to have a good chance of winning, the North Vietnamese would not be inclined to make any negotiating concessions before the election.

10. But, in fact, Hanoi seems to assume that President Nixon will be re-elected. This strengthens the possibility that the North Vietnamese might calculate that they would have a better chance of gaining concessions from Washington before the election than afterward, when they might face a tougher administration stance. This appears to be the "advice" that the Soviets, and perhaps the Chinese as well, have given Hanoi. These considerations may have encouraged the Communists to continue probing Washington's position through meetings with Dr. Kissinger and various other informal contacts.

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Psychological Intangibles

11. Added to these practical considerations are certain basic psychological factors. The North Vietnamese leaders have been engaged in the struggle to create a unified Communist Vietnamese state virtually all of their adult lives and have adapted to the pressures exerted against them. Struggle has literally become a way of life for them rather than a temporary discomfort. Their stubbornness is reinforced by an absolute conviction of the righteousness of their cause and their Marxist faith in the inevitability of its ultimate success. Furthermore, as Hanoi constantly reminds the world, the Vietnamese people have historically defeated their enemies by simply outlasting them. Thus, as Ho Chi Minh maintained, Hanoi will win if only because it has more patience than the frustrated American adversary.

12. Unless they could negotiate a package deal which they believed would quickly lead to ultimate victory in the South, the Communist leaders' outlook on the struggle might make it difficult for them to agree to a cease-fire proposal. Although we know little about the dynamics of decision-making within the North Vietnamese Politburo, there now seems to be no single leader with sufficient power and prestige to reverse direction on such matters without serious challenge from his peers. The Politburo balance appears such that a basic shift in policy would result in some individual or group within the hierarchy gaining status at the expense of those overruled, thus jeopardizing the fabric of unity that has marked the Politburo's collegial structure since Ho's death. This fact, coupled with the belief that time ultimately is on their side, could reinforce the Communist leadership's reluctance to accept any cease-fire which does not simultaneously offer a clear shot at gaining political control in South Vietnam.

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II. Reports from South Vietnam vs Hanoi's Public Position

The Reports

13. Intelligence reports from the COSVN area of South Vietnam over the last month or so have contained two major themes: (a) COSVN is making preparations for the contingency of an early cease-fire; and (b) COSVN is preparing for expanded and more intense military action during the period September-October. These reports lead naturally to speculation that Hanoi may intend to make the compromises in its position necessary to bring about a negotiated suspension of the fighting before the US election. In the interim, under this line of speculation, it is attempting to put its forces--military and administrative--in the most advantageous position before a cease-fire goes into effect.*

14. Some of these reports come from reliable sources, but many of them contradict each other on certain specifics, particularly in regard to possible shifts in Communist negotiating demands. In some cases, moreover, the information comes third or fourth hand. For example, in late June, a province committee secretary reportedly told subordinates that COSVN had alerted him to the possibility of a cease-fire within one or two months. Another report, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] described a mid-June province-level briefing at which major COSVN military and political views were outlined, including a statement that the Communists would have to make certain concessions in order to take advantage of the US readiness for a cease-fire and negotiated settlement. Thus, the cadre at the meeting claimed that COSVN

**Attached to this memorandum is an Annex which summarizes the clandestine reports we have received over the past three months concerning Communist interest in a cease-fire.*

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would no longer demand that all US troops be withdrawn within a fixed time or that Thieu be removed and the Saigon regime overthrown. The theme that Thieu's removal was no longer a prerequisite to a cease-fire was echoed [REDACTED]

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15. In June, COSVN also appears to have ordered a complete restructuring of Communist territorial boundaries to conform to existing GVN boundaries. Apparently, the purpose of this move was to avoid possible complications in the event of a negotiated settlement and establishment of a coalition government. A reorganization along the indicated lines seems to have been completed in the area surrounding Saigon.

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[REDACTED] reporting in July continued to reflect Communist anticipation of an early cease-fire, but several sources contradicted the reports mentioned in the paragraph above and reiterated that Thieu's departure was still the sine qua non of a deal. More recent reports indicate that Communist officials are issuing instructions to be followed in the event of a cease-fire. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] now claims that COSVN has re-assigned specially trained cadres to two-thirds of the district- and province-level positions in Gia Dinh Province (surrounding Saigon) to cope with the anticipated post-cease-fire political struggle.

16. It would be tempting, on the basis of the number and geographic spread of these reports, to conclude that Hanoi has made a firm decision to negotiate an end to the war and is preparing its organization in the South to cope with the new situation. But the current spate of reports on Communist cease-fire terms and preparations in the COSVN area is not entirely unprecedented. In the late spring and summer of 1969 a similar rash of "cease-fire" talk erupted within Viet Cong ranks. All this discussion led nowhere, however, and it finally resulted in the issuance of harsh admonitions by COSVN against the laxity and caution of those cadre who thought peace was just around the corner. Just what led to the hope for a breakthrough then can only be guessed

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at, but in retrospect, it seems plausible that the Communist attitude reflected hopes for major concessions from Washington, stimulated by the advent of a new US administration, the vociferousness of anti-war sentiment, and the initial announcement of US troop withdrawals.

17. A similar situation may now obtain, particularly since many of the local Communist directives discussed above seem to anticipate US concessions as a basis for a cease-fire. Thus, it is possible, if not likely, that the reported "preparations" are only contingency arrangements as was the case in 1969. Finally, experience over the years has generally shown that reports from the lower level of the Communist apparatus in South Vietnam are often not reliable guides to Politburo intentions or decisions with respect to major policy issues. It is unlikely that plans for a major negotiating initiative by Hanoi would be revealed in advance to middle and low level Party cadre in the South, although the top COSVN leadership probably would be consulted. In the past, we have never learned of a new initiative from Communist sources in South Vietnam.

The Public Statements

18. In general, public statements from Hanoi have been the most useful indicators of trends in the leadership's thinking. A consistent element in all such statements has been Hanoi's insistence on a concurrent military and political settlement, rather than an arrangement that would simply permit the US to withdraw its forces (in exchange for a prisoner release), and leave political adjustments to be settled among the Vietnamese. A North Vietnamese broadcast on 13 August addressed the problem in this way,

"...one cannot deal only with the military problems without speaking of the political problem. To cease fire or to release the captured soldiers are only concrete acts; the political objective is the only problem of decisive significance."

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Communist doubts were further expressed in the same broadcast:

"No one naively believes that if there is a cease-fire, if the Americans withdraw their troops and if the captured soldiers are released, the Vietnamese people will be able to solve their own political problems..."

A recent Nhan Dan "Commentator" article, while ambiguous in some respects, reiterated the argument-- "the military and political problems are inseparable and must be settled simultaneously" before a cease-fire can be put into effect.

19. Hanoi has not clarified the nature or, especially, the details of what it might be willing to consider as an acceptable political arrangement in Saigon. The North Vietnamese have clearly and consistently demanded the establishment of a coalition government, although how much of the existing GVN structure could remain in such a coalition government has not been clear. Hanoi has always been firm on its demand that coalition be part of a settlement, but now, however, Hanoi is floating hints that US acceptance of the "principle" of coalition might be sufficient to open the way to a cease-fire. In the aforementioned Nhan Dan "Commentator" article, however, the US role in any political adjustment is blurred. While the article maintains that the US must end its support of the Thieu administration, the tone is less strident than in many past statements and appears to invite further discussion on the parameters of future American assistance. The structure of a coalition government is left to discussion between the Communists and the Saigon administration. The question remains--what must that Saigon administration look like before the Communists will talk to it? Nevertheless, the deliberate ambiguity suggests at least the chance of some flexibility in Hanoi's position.

20. A degree of ambiguity on the political framework of a settlement was also evident in Pham Van Dong's National Day speech on 2 September. The standard requirement for an "all-inclusive solution" was reaffirmed, and, in the military sphere, Dong took a hard intransigent line. He demanded an end to all US air, naval, and ground military activity

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in both Vietnams..."no matter where these activities come from," the total withdrawal of all American and allied military personnel (including advisers), the dismantling of American bases, and the termination of all US military assistance to the Saigon government. The political prerequisites, however, were not spelled out precisely. The North Vietnamese demand that the Saigon government dismantle its "repressive machinery" was missing. Dong reiterated that the US must end its support of the "puppet administration" and "agree to the establishment of a three-segment coalition government," but he did not specifically mention elections in this context. The clearest departure from previous North Vietnamese pronouncements at this level is the absence of any specific reference to Thieu's fate, though it is hard to imagine how Thieu could survive if Dong's other points were conceded.

III. Is a "May 8"-Type Cease-fire to Hanoi's Advantage?

21. From Hanoi's perspective, a simple cease-fire--even coupled with a complete withdrawal of American forces--could prove dangerous. US aid to the GVN, both military and political, would presumably continue, and ARVN would be given a respite to rebuild its forces, especially the elite units currently bearing the brunt of the fighting in the northern provinces. And so long as ARVN held together, in the Communist view, the GVN could resist any motion toward a settlement that would give the Communists a substantial political role in Saigon, even in the face of urgings (or threats) from Washington. The North Vietnamese leaders, moreover, may no longer be so confident that an end to active US military involvement would inevitably lead to the prompt collapse of the GVN. As the situation now stands, a cease-fire in place would give the Communist military forces little more than a toehold in the populated areas of South Vietnam.

22. A cease-fire might also work against Hanoi's efforts to counter the government's control in the countryside. The struggle against "pacification" during any cease-fire would come to depend largely on

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the effectiveness of the party apparatus among the population. And the Communists have evidenced increasing concern about the size and pervasiveness of the GVN's own security and control apparatus. Furthermore, despite indications that the Communist political infrastructure has begun to recover from the devastating losses suffered in the 1968 campaign, its ability to mount an effective challenge to government control in many areas is doubtful, particularly if the GVN were no longer distracted by main-force fighting. Party cadre are currently being urged to prepare for this kind of post-cease-fire struggle, but where Communist gains have been made thus far, the NVA's muscle has provided the boost.

23. Nonetheless, Hanoi might perceive some advantages in a cessation of the fighting. Communist forces would be able to rest and refit, rebuild their infrastructure, and consolidate their control over the areas they occupied. An end to the bombing and mining program would ease the strains and suffering of the North Vietnamese as well as facilitate supply efforts both into the DRV and to Communist forces in South Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. In addition, Hanoi may feel that an American military withdrawal in itself would remove a major prop from the South Vietnamese government. Despite the growing effectiveness of the Vietnamese air force, ARVN continues to feel a strong psychological dependence on US air power. If this support is removed, ARVN's confidence and resolve could slip badly.

24. The argument for a cease-fire might be improved in Hanoi's eyes if its forces made substantial gains on the battlefield in the next phase of the offensive or if large enough areas of South Vietnam were simply conceded to the Communists in some sort of cease-fire partition. Hanoi might then anticipate the start of a political unravelling of the Thieu regime. American acceptance of a rival to the Thieu administration (in a partition situation) would be interpreted by all Vietnamese parties as a significant diminution of political support for the GVN, even if US material assistance continued.

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IV. In Sum...

25. Hanoi does not seem to be under any compelling pressure to curtail its military campaign in the South or to offer major political concessions simply to gain a cease-fire. The bombing and mining programs have not imposed unmanageable burdens on the home front. Hanoi's allies have not cut off vital supplies, and Communist forces in the South, while not making spectacular progress at this time, are standing up to the pressure of the bombing and counterassaults by the ARVN. Thus, the chances of the North Vietnamese accepting a compromise settlement that is not, in their opinion, weighted in their favor seem very slim; and they are likely to remain unexcited by any US proposal which they do not believe will give them eventual control of South Vietnam. The spectre of the 1954 Geneva Conference, which they believe snatched hard-won victory from their grasp, still looms very large in North Vietnamese thinking.

26. In our view, then, although Hanoi clearly is weighing the modalities and consequences of a cease-fire, this is probably predicated on the belief that the US sooner or later will meet minimum Communist demands for a settlement. There may be movement in Hanoi's private negotiating position of which we are not aware. The evidence available to us, however, indicates that despite cease-fire rumors and maneuverings, Hanoi's reluctance to accept the military half of the loaf, with only an option--however promising--on the political half, coupled with the continuing ability of the Communists to fight on, makes a cease-fire in the near term appear doubtful.

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ANNEX

ALLEGED NORTH VIETNAMESE AND VIET CONG INTEREST IN
A CEASE-FIRE: SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT [REDACTED]
REPORTING SINCE MID-JUNE 1972

25X1X4

Date of Report

25X1X7 Summary of Information

14 June 1972

[REDACTED]
reported in early June that a
VC district chief in VC My Tho
Province had predicted during a
training and indoctrination ses-
sion that there would be a cease-
fire within three months.

25X1A2g

17 June 1972

[REDACTED]
on briefings on the current sit-
uation which he had attended at
a May training course in a Cam-
bodian secret zone. According
to the briefings a major change
in the Party's public negotia-
ting position is probable, at
the latest around the beginning
of 1973. The new position, which
would be publicly disclosed only
"at the last minute," would be
flexible, including a possibility
of Thieu staying on as President.

25X1X6

25X1A2g

20 June 1972

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[REDACTED] stated on
22 May that the DRV must be pre-
pared, if it failed to achieve
its objective of total victory
in 1972, to return to protracted
warfare. [REDACTED]

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Date of Report

Summary of Information

24 June 1972

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Three separate reports from [REDACTED] indicate that in early June, NVA and VC units in VC My Tho Province had received instructions to hold indoctrination sessions in preparation for a cease-fire. The instructions emphasize that a cease-fire would not mean the end of the struggle. 25X1A2g

24 June 1972

25X1X6

In mid-June [REDACTED]

25X1X6

[REDACTED] that there would be no cease-fire until a political and military solution has been reached. An American promise to cease all acts of war, including air strikes, could not be trusted. 25X1A2g

26 June 1972

25X1X6

25X1X6

[REDACTED] the VC are no longer insisting upon Thieu's resignation as a prerequisite to negotiations. 25X1X6

25X1X6

[REDACTED] was also told, at a COSVN briefing held near the Cambodian border around 11 June, that a cease-fire in 1972 was inevitable. 25X1A2g

27 June 1972

25X1X6

25X1X6

[REDACTED], the political and youth proselyting cadre of the interfifth -sixth precinct party committee of Saigon on 21 June told a political indoctrination session in Dinh Tuong that the VC would accept Thieu as President following a cease-fire, provided that he would accept the "7 points." [REDACTED]

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Date of Report

28 June 1972

25X1X6 Summary of Information

25X1X6

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] several COSVN level cadres transmitted COSVN instructions to accelerate counter-pacification and military efforts in preparation for a cease-fire and political settlement. COSVN's objective was described as to seize the bulk of the countryside between June and September. President Thieu's resignation would not be required as a precondition for a settlement.

25X1A2g

28 June 1972

The VC Province Committee Secretary of Kien Phong reportedly told a meeting of district and village level cadres on 13 June that they should prepare for the possibility of a cease-fire within one or two months.

25X1A2g

29 June 1972

The VC Phu Yen Province Committee in late June advised district and village committees to prepare for a cease-fire around mid-July. The cease-fire would result from Chinese pressure on North Vietnam and the impact of U.S. military force. After the cease-fire, the VC would demand Thieu's resignation.

25X1A2g

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Date of Report

Summary of Information

7 July 1972

25X1X7

In late June

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reported, according

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" that VC Subregions 1 through 6 had recently been restructured along lines conforming with GVN administrative and territorial boundaries.

25X1X6

reported that, according to the chief of the VC Long An Province military intelligence section, COSVN was restructuring VC boundaries along GVN lines throughout South Vietnam in order to avoid complicated and time-consuming problems which otherwise would arise during a negotiated settlement or the establishing of a coalition government.)

25X1X6

13 July 1972

the VC would not insist upon Thieu's resignation alleged that the VC position had changed and that, because of his stubbornness, Thieu would be unacceptable as a member of a coalition government.

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Date of Report

25X1X6 Summary of Information

24 July 1972

25X1X6

[REDACTED], the Thu Bien Subregion committee secretary sent on 10 July a message to lower echelons announcing that the subregion leadership expected the formation of a coalition government soon, possibly as early as August 1972. Even after formation of the coalition government, the VC would promote political struggle. The message noted that exclusion of Thieu from a coalition government would be a part of the agreement establishing it. [REDACTED]

25X1X6

25X1A2g

27 July 1972

[REDACTED], the secretary of the VC Subregion 1 party committee had in July stated the offensive planned for that month was being postponed to an unspecified date immediately preceding a cease-fire. At that time 50% of VC and NVA forces would be committed to an offensive designed to seize as much territory as possible in a "last country-wide offensive" aimed at giving the VC the upper hand in a coalition government. [REDACTED] said that, despite newspaper speculation to the contrary, Thieu was still unacceptable in a coalition government. [REDACTED]

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Date of Report

25X1X6 Summary of Information

29 July 1972

[REDACTED]

July that COSVN had instructed the VC Tra Vinh Province committee concerning a fall offensive and cease-fire terms. During the offensive local forces were to try to seize populated areas in the delta now controlled by the government. [REDACTED]

25X1A2g

30 July 1972

On 22 July a VC village chairman in Phu Yen Province purportedly told a village meeting that the VC in Phu Yen would accept nothing less than a coalition government. He criticized the Communist failure to insist upon a coalition government in 1954. [REDACTED]

25X1A2g

5 August 1972

On 14 July General Sau Phuoc, Commander of VC MR 6 reportedly told a meeting of province, city and district cadres in Binh Thuan to discuss a COSVN directive calling for assassination of Vietnamese and American police and intelligence agents who might, after a cease-fire, work against the VC. Until this plan has been at least partially completed, COSVN does not, according to Phuoc, want a cease-fire. [REDACTED]

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Date of Report

Summary of Information

9 August 1972

On 19 July a VC district security chief in VC An Giang Province briefed village level cadres on preparations to be taken before a cease-fire. Describing a cease-fire period as an ideal occasion for subverting the Thieu government, he urged VC sympathizers to make an active display, after a cease-fire, of their true sympathies. The district chief emphasized that the cease-fire would be used to prepare another general offensive. The cadres attending the briefing were skeptical, especially of the advice to reveal their VC sympathies, and they were inclined to view the meeting as propaganda preceding another rice requirement.

25X1A2g

22 August 1972

In mid-August the director of the Japan-Vietnam Trade Association (JVTA) [REDACTED]

25X1X6-9

25X1X6

[REDACTED] claimed to have learned from a North Vietnamese trade official in Hong Kong that movement towards a solution to the war is becoming evident and that officials of the DRV Foreign Ministry and Chamber of Commerce are now discussing "post-war" activities. The DRV will, according to the JVTA official, use American funds to begin its reconstruction. [REDACTED]

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Date of Report

23 August 1972

25X1X6

Summary of Information

25X1X7

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] a meeting of high level Subregion 1 cadres had in early July reviewed a 1 July COSVN message on American peace proposals. The VC consider that only an "on the spot cease-fire," under which each side retains the territory under its control, would be acceptable. The COSVN message called for a strong attack between 1 August and 3 November to bring additional territory under VC control before a cease-fire. After negotiation of a cease-fire, according to a district security chief who attended the above meeting, the VC would conduct a general uprising and simultaneous military attack in order to gain final victory.

25X1A2g

25 August 1972

A member of the VC Nam Chi District Committee (near the border of GVN Binh Duong and Hau Nghia Provinces) stated on 13 August that COSVN had decided that the war must be ended; therefore, it was necessary prior to a cease-fire to kill as many GVN hamlet, village, police officials and informants as possible.

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Date of Report

25 August 1972

Summary of Information

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[REDACTED] the VC in mid-August were expecting a cease-fire and coalition government after the U.S. elections. VC liberation committees in the district had therefore been ordered to increase their activities in and seize control of government-dominated hamlets from mid-August through October.

25X1A2g

25X1X6

28 August 1972

In late August [REDACTED]

25X1x6

ince, COSVN had recently sent to all province committees a document entitled "Provisional Rural Charter" and containing instructions for the event of a cease-fire. The document calls for non-recognition of the Thieu government, including abolition of its hamlet and village machinery. It also discusses security and the rights of citizens.

25X1A2g

25X1X6

29 August 1972

On 21 August [REDACTED] claimed to have been informed by a VC cadre in VC Lam Dong Province that a provisional government would assume control of the country within several months. There would be a cease-fire, during which GVN and ARVN personnel and collaborators would be forced to surrender to the VC and would be killed.

25X1A2g

A-9

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Date of Report

Summary of Information

30 August 1972

25X1X6

25X1X6

[REDACTED] COSVN was replacing VC cadres in Gia Dinh Province by cadres specially selected and trained by COSVN. This was because of the importance of the Saigon - Gia Dinh area in the "forthcoming political struggle." A COSVN military proselyting cadre said that most COSVN-level cadres expect a 1972 political settlement, before which they hope to launch one overall attack throughout South Vietnam designed to gain control of more rural areas before a settlement.

25X1A2g

3 September 1972

25X1X6

[REDACTED]
VC were beginning training sessions in mid-August for district and village level cadres in the An Giang area on the subject of preparations for a cease-fire expected in October. Principal emphasis during a cease-fire would be placed on recruitment of PSDF members and insertion of legal cadres into GVN agencies.

25X1A2g

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Date of Report

Summary of Information

3 September 1972

At an indoctrination session for district level cadres held in Kien Hoa Province in mid-August, a VC district committee secretary, after claiming many victories and the killing of 200,000 (sic) ARVN troops since the beginning of the offensive, went on to exhort to greater efforts and to criticize VC shortcomings. (Only briefly touching on the subject of a cease-fire) the secretary said that VC families should be prepared to display a flag after a cease-fire and that, when a cease-fire is imminent, a plan would be presented.

25X1A2g

25X1X6

4 September 1972

plans for reorganization of military forces and administrative alignments in GVN MR 3. The plan had been drawn up, in expectation of a cease-fire, before the beginning of the March offensive, but no steps to implement it, other than a training course, had by late August been taken. It was not clear whether the projected new VC provincial boundaries would correspond to those of the GVN.

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25X1A2g

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Date of Report

6 September 1972

Summary of Information

25X1X6

leading cadres in VC MR 3 (lower delta) "hope" that there will be a political solution prior to the U.S. elections, after which the central party will not accept a political solution but will pursue a complete military victory. A skeleton provisional government, including legal cadres within GVN controlled areas, is being set up throughout VC MR 3 in preparation for a cease-fire. Organization of secret armed units is a permanent requirement to defeat the GVN and also to insure superior armed strength after a cease-fire.

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